

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-6, and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen et al. in view of Ryonai et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection, because the cited references, alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the claimed first layer including a plurality of noncontiguous islands formed on a substrate, as described in independent claims 1, 2 and 13.

The Chen et al. reference relates to a magnetic recording medium including a seed layer 22 provided on a substrate 12. The reference teaches that the seed layer 22 consists of randomly oriented discrete grains 74 which “are contiguous” (see col. 16, lines 44-49). Fig. 2 of Chen et al. shows the grains of the seed layer being contiguous with respect to each other.

In the present invention, the plurality of islands in the first layer are noncontiguous. In contrast, the Chen et al. reference teaches a recording medium have contiguous grains in the seed layer. The Ryonai et al. reference also does not disclose or suggest the claimed first layer having noncontiguous islands. Therefore, even if combined, the cited references still would not disclose or suggest this feature of the present invention. Accordingly, independent claims 1, 2 and 13, and their dependent claims 3-6 are allowable over the cited references.

Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen et al. and Ryonai et al. and in view of Takahashi et al. Applicant respectfully traverses

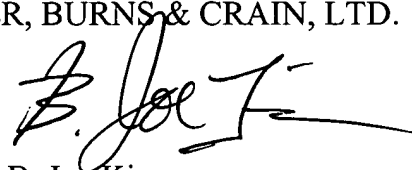
this rejection for the reasons given above traversing the rejections of claim 1, from which claim 4 depends, and because of the additional features recited in claim 4.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that this Application is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

GREER, BURNS & CRAIN, LTD.

By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Joe Kim", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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